

REMARKS

This response is submitted in response to the final Office Action of June 13, 2005. Claims 1-13 and 17-21 are pending in the application. Claims 6-13, 19 and 21 are allowed. In the Office Action, Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,564,350 to Holmes (“*Holmes*”) and by U.S. Patent No. 4,123,207 to Dudley (“*Dudley*”). Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Holmes* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,110,523 to Guggiari (“*Guggiari*”), and over *Dudley* in view of *Guggiari*. Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over *Holmes* and *Guggiari* in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,764,952 to Meakin (“*Meakin*”), and over *Dudley* and *Guggiari* in view of *Meakin*. Finally, Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over *Holmes* in view of *Meakin*, and over *Dudley* in view of *Meakin*. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections should be withdrawn.

Regarding Claim 17, *Holmes* does not disclose or suggest a die plate comprising a fluid inlet passage and a fluid outlet passage, and therefore does not anticipate this claim. The Office Action indicates that the die plate of *Holmes* includes #s 96, 97, 98 and 104 of the Figures. However, as clearly specified in the disclosure of *Holmes*, the die plate is merely #96, (see Col. 5, Lines 45-46, “...the die assembly 38 comprises a circular die plate 96...,” *emphasis added*). Passages 116 and 118 of *Holmes* are used to transport hot oil to and from the die assembly (Col. 5, Line 68-Col. 6, Line 5). However, these passages 116 and 118 do not reach the die plate 96 itself (Col. 7, Lines 32-35), and, in fact, the insulating ring 98 prevents hot oil from reaching the die plate 96. Therefore, the requirement of Claim 17 of the present invention that the die plate comprise a fluid inlet passage and a fluid outlet passage for receiving fluid is not suggested, taught or disclosed by *Holmes*.

Nor does *Dudley* anticipate the present invention. *Dudley* does not disclose or suggest a die plate comprising a fluid inlet passage and a separate fluid outlet passage, as required by the present claims, particularly Claim 17. The specification of *Dudley* clearly sets out that steam entry 404 and steam exit 406 are a continuous pathway. At Column 4, Lines 3-16, *Dudley* discloses a continuous flow-through to provide ease of manufacture and critical exhaust of steam. Claim 17 of the present invention, in contrast, requires a distinctly separate fluid inlet passage and another passage for the outlet of fluid.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 be withdrawn, and Claim 17 be allowed.

Claims 1-5, 18 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over *Holmes* in view of *Guggiari* or *Meakin* and *Dudley* in view of *Guggiari* or *Meakin*. As discussed fully above, neither *Holmes* nor *Dudley* discloses, teaches or suggests at least one claimed element of the present invention, as neither discloses, teaches or suggests a die plate comprising a fluid inlet passage and a separate fluid outlet passage. *Guggiari* teaches a hydraulic motor for purposes of operating a cutter, and *Meakin* teaches a coupling means having an opening for the purpose of receiving a fastener. However, the combination of *Guggiari* or *Meakin* and *Holmes* or *Guggiari* or *Meakin* and *Dudley* still would not meet Applicants' claimed invention, as the die plate comprising a fluid inlet passage and a separate fluid outlet passage is still not disclosed or suggested by the cited references.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the obviousness rejections of Claims 1-5, 18 and 20 be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified patent application and earnestly solicit allowance of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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